

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 33272 01 OF 03 091948Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-07 OMB-01

TRSE-00 PRS-01 IO-13 NEA-10 AF-08 /096 W

----- 032023

P R 091926Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6970

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 33272

NOFORN

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR FR VN

SUBJ: FRENCH VIEWS OF VIETNAMESE DEPUTY FOREIGN
MINISTER'S VISIT

REF: PARIS 32550

SUMMARY: THE FRENCH ARE VERY RETICENT ABOUT THE RECENT
VISIT OF SRV DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH.
BILATERAL MATTERS THEY CONSIDER NOT OF GREAT IMPORTANCE
TO OUTSIDERS AND THE VIETNAMESE ASKED THEM TO KEEP TO
THEMSELVES THE VIEWS OF WORLD PROBLEMS EXPRESSED IN
THE POLITICAL TOUR D'HORIZON. ONE PURPOSE OF THE
TRIP WAS TO PREPARE FOR THE VISIT OF PHAM VAN DONG; IT
WAS A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT SINCE EVERYONE WAS GREATLY
IMPRESSED BY THACH, HIS PROTEGE. BILATERAL MATTERS
INCLUDED: THE STATUS OF THE FRENCH CONSULATE GENERAL
IN SAIGON, EVACUATION FLIGHTS FROM SIAGON, AIR LINK
TO HANOI, FRENCH INVESTMENTS IN SVN, AND PETROLEUM.
OF THE TOPICS IN THE TOUR D'HORIZON, THE FRENCH WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 33272 01 OF 03 091948Z

DISCUSS WITH US ONLY US/VIETNAMESE RELATIONS AND THE

PROBLEMS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND THEN ONLY PARTIALLY. THE FRENCH THINK THE VIETNAMESE WILL BE REASONABLE AND WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK OUT SOMETHING WITH THEM IF WE ARE ALSO "FLEXIBLE." HANOI IS "WORRIED" ABOUT EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, PARTICULARLY THAILAND. END SUMMARY.

1. THE QUAI HAS GIVEN US A CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN FULL RUNDOWN ON THE RECENT VISIT TO PARIS (NOV 1-7) OF SRV DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN CO THACH. QUAI ARGUED THAT ONE HALF OF THE PROGRAM WAS MERELY BILATERAL PROBLEMS OF NO REAL SIGNIFICANCE TO OTHERS, MANY TOTALLY MINOR AND ONLY A FEW OF REAL IMPORTANCE. IN ADDITION, THE TOUR D'HORIZON OF WORLD PROBLEMS, IN WHICH THE VIETNAMESE WERE MORE OPEN THAN THE FRENCH HAD ANTICIPATED, CONTAINED VIEWS WHICH THE VIETNAMESE SPECIFICALLY ASKED THE FRENCH NOT TO DISCUSS WITH OTHERS. THE SOURCE COMMENTED THAT THE VIETNAMESE, EVEN TO SOMEONE SO SOPHISTICATED AS THACH, DID NOT SEEM VERY MUCH AT EASE IN DISCUSSING POLITICS WITH A "CAPITALIST COUNTRY," AND THE FRENCH WERE VERY CONCERNED THAT NOTHING GET BACK TO THE VIETNAMESE WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE WHAT THEY CONSIDERED TO BE A VERY FAVORABLY EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP.

2. THE QUAI THOUGHT THAT ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSES OF THACH'S TRIP WAS TO TEST THE GROUND FOR THE UPCOMING VISIT (PROBABLY SPRING 1977) OF SRV PRIME MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG. IT HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY AGREED THAT THERE WOULD BE FRANCO/VIETNAMESE CONTACTS, BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THEY WOULD TAKE PLACE IN HANOI OR PEKING. THE VIETNAMESE FINALLY PROPOSED THACH'S VISIT WITH VERY LITTLE ADVANCE WARNING. THACH MADE A GREAT EFFORT TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION, AND HE SUCCEEDED "IN SEDUCING EVERYONE". HE WAS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL INFORMED ON WORLD MATERS, A VERY CAPABLE -- BUT TOUGH -- NEGOTIATOR, A PRAGMATIC, NON-IDEOLOGICAL DEBATOR, AND A WITTY AND EFFECTIVE SPEAKER. THACH SHOWED HIS GOVERNMENT AS PARTICULARLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARDS FRANCE AND PREPARING FOR CLOSER AND MORE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION IN THE FUTURE. WHENEVER HE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 33272 01 OF 03 091948Z

COULD SAY PLEASANT THINGS TO THE FRENCH, HE DID SO. IN THE RUNDOWN OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, THACH HAD TO BE A TOUGH NEGOTIATOR IN DEFENDING HIS COUNTRY'S RECORD AND IN POINTING OUT FRENCH NON-PERFORMANCE, BUT IT WAS DONE WITH GRACE AND HUMOR. THE FRENCH WERE VERY IMPRESSED BY THACH AND THOUGHT IT AUGURED WELL BOTH FOR THE EVOLUTION OF THEIR RELATIONS AND FOR THE UPCOMING TRIP BY PHAM VAN DONG.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 33272 02 OF 03 091950Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-07 OMB-01

TRSE-00 PRS-01 IO-13 NEA-10 AF-08 /096 W

----- 032031

P R 091926Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6971

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 PARIS 33272

NOFORN

BILATERAL RELATIONS

3. FRENCH CONSULATE GENERAL IN SAIGON. AS THE PRESS HAD NOTED, ONE OF THE SUBJECTS RAISED WAS THE JURIDICAL STATUS OF THE FRENCH CONSULATE GENERAL IN SAIGON. THE FRENCH APPARENTLY WERE UNABLE TO HAVE THE SRV CLARIFY THE STATUS OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL, BUT THEY RECEIVED ASSURANCES THAT IT WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION "NORMALLY". THE FRENCH GATHERED THAT THE CHINESE AND SOVIETS MIGHT BE PUSHING FOR CONSULATES IN SAIGON, AND ANY FORMALIZATION OF THE STATUS OF THE FRENCH CONSULATE GENERAL WOULD INTERFERE WITH VIETNAMESE EFFORTS TO KEEP USSR AND PRC OUT OF SAIGON.

4. EVACUATION FLIGHTS FROM SAIGON. THE FRENCH BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THE FLIGHTS FROM SAIGON EVACUATING FRENCH CITIZENS. THEY ANTICIPATE

NO TROUBLE IN SCHEDULING FLIGHTS UNTIL THE END OF THIS
YEAR AND HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PROLONG THEM AFTERWARDS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 33272 02 OF 03 091950Z

THEY WILL NOT BE ON A REGULAR BASIS BUT WILL OCCUR
WHEN THEY ARE ABLE TO FILL A PLANE. THE FRENCH MUST
OBTAIN LANDING RIGHTS EACH TIME A FLIGHT IS SET UP.
AS THE GOF APPEARED ABOUT TO END ITS EVACUATION FLIGHTS,
MORE FRENCH CITIZENS IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES TO THE
CONSULATE SO THAT THEY NOW STILL HAVE SOME 4,000
FRENCH WHO MAY DESIRE REPATRIATION, ALMOST DOUBLE THE
NUMBER THE GOF HAD ORIGINALLY THOUGHT THEY WERE DOWN TO.

5. AIR LINK WITH HANOI. AT THE END OF LAST YEAR, THE
FRENCH TRIED TO MOVE AHEAD ON AN AIR LINK BETWEEN
FRANCE AND VIETNAM. THEY DISLIKED HAVING TO GO VIA
VIENTIANE AND TAKE A SOVIET AIRCRAFT. THE
VIETNAMESE NOW APPEAR MOST ANXIOUS ALSO TO HAVE DIRECT
AIR CONTACTS WITH "CAPITALIST COUNTRIES" PARTICULARLY
FRANCE. AN AIR TRANSPORT DELEGATION IS NOW IN HANOI
TO WORK OUT A PARIS-HANOI AND BEYOND FLIGHT. OVERFLIGHTS
ARE ANOTHER PROBLEM, CONSIDERABLY COMPLICATED BY THE
COUP IN BANGKOK.

6. FRENCH INVESTMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE FRENCH
DISCUSSED THE GENERALITIES OF FRENCH INVESTMENTS IN
SOUTH VIETNAM AND WERE TOLD THAT THE SRV WOULD SOON
COME OUT WITH A FOREIGN INVESTMENT CODE. THACH
BRIEFED THEM ON THE GENERAL OUTLINES OF THIS CODE:
EXPORT INDUSTRIES COULD BE 100 PERCENT FOREIGN OWNED,
INDUSTRIES INVOLVED IN THE INTERNAL MARKET WOULD BE 51
PERCENT VIETNAMESE OWNERSHIP AND 49 PERCENT FOREIGN.
THE INVESTMENT PERIOD WOULD BE 15 YEARS, ENTERPRISES
WOULD BE ABLE TO REPATRIATE PROFITS, ENTERPRISES WOULD
BE ABLE TO REPATRIATE THEIR CAPITAL INVESTMENT, RULES
FOR INDEMNIFICATION WOULD BE SPELLED OUT. THE FRENCH
HAD LEARNED THAT SOME OF THE EXISTING ENTERPRISES
WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION UNDER THE NEW
INVESTMENT CODE. OTHERS WOULD BE TAKEN OVER BY THE
VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. SINCE THIS WOULD BE A VERY
DELICATE MATTER BETWEEN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND FRENCH
BUSINESSMEN, THEY COULD NOT CLARIFY THE TYPES OF
INVESTMENT WHICH WOULD BE HANDLED IN WHICH FASHION.

7. PETROLEUM. THE VIETNAMESE SHOWED A PARTICULAR
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 33272 02 OF 03 091950Z

INTEREST IN EXPLOITING THEIR POSSIBLE PETROLEUM RESOURCES. THEY PROVED TO BE ALREADY VERY DIFFICULT NEGOTIATORS ON THIS SUBJECT AND SOURCE NOTED THIS WAS UNDERSTANDABLE SINCE THEY WERE BEING FULLY ADVISED BY THE ALGERIANS IN PETROLEUM MATTERS.

8. FOREIGN RELATIONS. QUAI SOURCE SAID THAT THE FRENCH HAVE NO BASIC FOREIGN POLICY CONNECTIONS WITH VIETNAMESE, UNLIKE THEIR RELATIONS WITH, FOR EXAMPLE, EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THEY NONETHELESS HAD A BROAD RANGE DISCUSSION OF MANY WORLD PROBLEMS IN WHICH EACH SIDE GAVE HIS WAY OF SEEING THE PROBLEM AND ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS GAVE HIS ADVICE TO THE OTHER SIDE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE VIETNAMESE GAVE ADVICE TO THE FRENCH CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA; THE VIETNAMESE, WHO HAD ATTENDED THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO ADVISED PARIS IN THE LIGHT OF THE SENTIMENTS OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. THE SOURCE IMPLIED FRANCE GAVE ITS ADVICE ON THE HANDLING OF THE US AND REACTION TO THE NEW THAI GOVERNMENT. MOST OF THE VIETNAMESE VIEWS WERE PREDICTABLE, BUT THACH ASKED THE FRENCH NOT TO DISCUSS THEM.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 33272 03 OF 03 091948Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-07 OMB-01

TRSE-00 PRS-01 IO-13 NEA-10 AF-08 /096 W

----- 032101

P R 091926Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6972

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 PARIS 33272

NOFORN

9. THE US. THACH MADE IT CLEAR THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO BE VERY FLEXIBLE IN HANDLING ITS RELATIONS WITH THE US, INCLUDING ENTRY INTO THE UN. (THACH TOLD THE PRESS: "VIETNAM IS READY TO EXAMINE WITH THE US PENDING PROBLEMS WITH AN OPEN MIND.") HE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE FRENCH THAT IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE US HIS COUNTRY WAS FAR MORE INTERESTED IN SUBSTANCE, THAT IS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, THAN IN FORM, THAT IS REAFFIRMATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. IN FACT THE FRENCH WERE STRUCK BY THE FACT THAT THACH DID NOT PARTICULARLY MENTION THE PARIS AGREEMENT. THE FRENCH MADE CLEAR THEIR DESIRE THAT VIETNAM ENTER THE UN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; THEY BELIEVE VIETNAM PARTICIPATION IN THE UN WOULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE TO THE US BY EXPOSING VIETNAM TO THE PRESSURES OF WORLD OPINION. VIETNAM HAD ALREADY BEEN BEHAVING RATHER MODERATELY, FOR EXAMPLE AT COLOMBO, BUT IT WOULD BE EVEN MORE RESPONSIBLE IF IT WERE ALSO A MEMBER OF THE UN, THE QUAI THOUGHT. THE FRENCH REMAINED CONVINCED THAT IF THE US

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 33272 03 OF 03 091948Z

WORKED OUT A "SUITABLE FORMULA", IT WOULD BE ABLE LATER TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE MIA QUESTION. THE QUAI SOURCE SAID THAT THE FORMULA WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. IF THE US INSTEAD ATTEMPTED A FRONTAL CONFRONTATION CONCERNING THE MIA AND LINKING THAT PROBLEM TO UN ENTRY, THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE NO PROGRESS.

10. SOUTHEAST ASIA. VIETNAMESE EXPRESSED VERY LITTLE CONCERN ABOUT PROBLEMS "TO THE NORTH" DESPITE THE MAJOR CHANGES INSIDE CHINA. THEY WERE, ON THE OTHER HAND, VERY CONCERNED ABOUT EVENTS TO THE SOUTH, PARTICULARLY IN THAILAND BUT ALSO IN SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA. THEY APPEARED VERY DISTRESSED THAT THEY HAD PROCEEDED FAIRLY WELL IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE THAI ONLY TO HAVE THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WITH WHOM THEY HAD BEEN DEALING, THROWN OUT AND HIS PRINCIPAL DEPUTY IN EFFECT IMPRISONED. THACH EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE PROBLEMS BREWING IN THAILAND AND ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE IMPACT THEY WOULD HAVE ON THE STABILITY OF SEA.

RUSH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS33272
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760417-0904
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761166/aaaacff.tel
Line Count: 329
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Reference: 76 PARIS 32550
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by hartledg>; APPROVED <16 SEP 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH VIEWS OF VIETNAMESE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, FR, VN, (NGUYEN CO THACH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006